

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2237

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 3085

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NP, IN

SUBJ: NEPAL'S REACTION TO INDIAN EVENTS

1. DURING A GENERAL TOUR D'HORIZON JULY 8, PALACE FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISOR CHIRAN THAPA TOLD CHARGE THAT GON WAS IN MANY WAYS GRATIFIED AT MRS. GANDHI'S STEPS AGAINST INDIAN OPPOSITION LEADERS. HE SAID THAT VIRTUALLY ALL INDIAN OPPOSITION POLITICIANS WERE UNSYMPATHETIC TO NEPAL AND TO HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT. J.P. NARAYAN AND SOCIALISTS IN PARTICULAR HAD CLOSE TIES WITH NEPALI CONGRESS EXILES. SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL HAD CRTICIZED MONARCHIAL SYSTEM IN NEPAL. RABIDLY RIGHT WING AND ANTI-CHINESE JLFA SANGH WAS HIGHLY CRITICAL OF NEPAL'S FOREIGN POLICY AND DESPITE ITS HINDU SYMPATHIES WISHED TO SEE NEPAL MORE CLOSELY TIED TO INDIA.

2. THAPA ALSO NOTED THAT ONE OF THE LESSONS TO BE DRAWN FROM RECENT INDIAN EVENTS WAS THAT FORCEFUL ACTION AND DECISIVE LEADERSHIP IN UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRY CAN BE EFFECTIVE IN CONTROLLING DISRUPTIVE FORCES AND DISSIDENT SENTIMENTS. HE CLEARLY IMPLIED THAT NEPAL FELT ITSELF VINDICATED IN THE CONSERVATIVE AND MODERATELY AUTHORITARIAN SYSTEM WHICH IT HAD ADOPTED.

3. COMMENT: IT IS HIGHLY LIKELY THAT THAPA'S VIEWS ARE
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SHARED BY OTHER PALACE OFFICIALS AND PROBABLY BY THE

KING HIMSELF. FOR THEM, INDIAN DEVELOPMENTS ARE A SOURCE OF SOME SATISFACTION. HOWEVER, FOR THOSE WHO HAD HOPED FOR SWEEPING CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS AND A SUBSTANTIAL LIBERALIZATION OF NEPAL'S POLITICAL SYSTEM, INDIAN EVENTS ARE A DISAPPOINTMENT. THIS WILL BE ALL THE MORE TRUE IF THE KING DRAWS THE CONCLUSION THAT EXTENSIVE POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION IS NOT IN FACT EITHER NEEDED OR DESIRABLE UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. QUANTON

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